

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU, CY

SUBJ: CYPRUS: FOLLOWING-UP AFTER BRUSSELS

REF: ANKARA 4301

1. I HAVE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED BILL MACCOMBER'S DISCUSSION OF WAYS (REFTEL) IN WHICH WE MIGHT HELP GET THE GREEK AND TURKISH GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM IN THE IMPROVED ATMOSPHERE CREATED BY THE BRUSSELS MEETINGS.

2. IT IS OF COURSE TRUE THAT CARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS ARE EXTREMELY RELUCTANT TO DEFINE GREEK POSITIONS IN TERMS MORE SPECIFIC THAN THEY HAVE USED UNTIL NOW. RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, THEY BELIEVE THAT IN THE EXCHANGES THAT HAVE OCCURRED TO DATE THE GREEK SIDE HAS SHOWN WILLINGNESS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS WHILE THE TURKISH SIDE HAS REMAINED VIRTUALLY INFLEXIBLE. CARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS BELIEVE THAT THE TURKS CAN HAVE NO DOUBT THAT GREECE AND GREEK CYPRIOTS ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT A BI-ZONAL SOLUTION. AT THIS POINT, THEY BELIEVE THAT THE TURKS SHOULD INDICATE WHAT THEY ARE WILLING TO GIVE IN RETURN. WITHOUT SOME PRIOR ASSURANCE OF THE EXTENT OF TURKISH WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE ON THE SUBJECT OF REFUGEES AND TERRITORY, IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HARD--PROBABLY IMPOSSIBLE--TO CONVINCE GREEK LEADERSHIP THAT ANY PERCENTAGE THEY VOL-
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UNTEERED WOULD NOT SIMPLY BECOME A NEW CONSTRAINT ON THEIR

NEGOTIATING POSITION.

3. THE GREEKS HAVE OTHER, MORE TANGIBLE REASONS FOR WANTING TO AVOID PERCENTAGES. THEY ARE UNDERSTANDABLY UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT GETTING OUT IN FRONT OF THE GREEK CYPRIOTS IN THE MANIFESTLY UNPOPULAR JOB OF CARVING UP CYPRIOT REAL ESTATE. WHATEVER PERCENTAGE THE GREEK SIDE SUGGESTED, WHETHER REALISTIC OR NOT, WOULD HAVE TO BE ENDORSED BY THE GREEK CYPRIOTS WITH THE EVER PRESENT RISK OF SHARP DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN ATHENS AND NICOSIA. MORE FUNDAMENTAL IS THE FACT THAT THE ACTUAL PERCENTAGE OF TERRITORY TO BE AVAILABLE TO THE GREEK CYPRIOTS IN A FINAL SETTLEMENT IS PERHAPS LESS IMPORTANT THAN ITS LOCATION AND VIABILITY. THIS IS A POINT THAT THE GREEKS HAVE MADE REPEATEDLY AND COULD BE EXPECTED TO MAKE AGAIN IF WE WERE TO RAISE THE SUBJECT WITH THEM ONCE MORE.

4. FOR THESE REASONS--AND IN THE LIGHT OF GREEK REACTIONS ON THIS POINT IN BRUSSELS--I AM NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE CHANCES OF PERSUADING THE GREEKS TO TAKE THE LEAD NOW IN SPECIFYING A PERCENTAGE WHICH THEY WOULD REGARD AS AN ACCEPTABLE TRADE-OFF FOR THEIR AGREEMENT TO A BI-ZONAL SOLUTION. WHAT SEEMS TO ME A MORE PROMISING APPROACH IS BILL MACOMBER'S SUGGESTION ABOUT THE TWO-MEN-IN-A-CORNER ALTERNATIVE AIMED AT PRODUCING SOME SORT OF PACKAGE DEAL. TERRITORIAL PERCENTAGES AND BI-ZONALITY ARE ONLY TWO OF THE ELEMENTS, ALBEIT IMPORTANT ONES, WHICH ARE LIKELY TO BECOME THE COMPONENTS OF A FINAL SETTLEMENT. REFUGEES, POWERS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, AND OTHER PROBLEMS MUST ALSO BE ADDRESSED AND BALANCED AGAINST EACH OTHER. THE GREEKS, THE TURKS AND THE TWO CYPRIOT COMMUNITIES, HOWEVER RELUCTANT THEY MAY BE TO DO SO, ARE THE ONLY PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE WHO CAN DECIDE HOW THE PIECES SHOULD FIT TOGETHER. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT OUR EFFORTS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE DIRECTED TO PERSUADING THEM TO GET ON WITH A JOB THAT NO ONE ELSE CAN DO. WHILE OFFERING THEM ALL POSSIBLE ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE WHEN WE CAN, I THINK OUR OWN STRATEGY--FOR THE PRESENT, AT LEAST--SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE PREMISED ON FLEXIBILITY, AVOIDING BEING WHIPSAWED IN GREEK-TURKISH GAMES, AND KEEPING A U.S. TRADEMARK FROM APPEARING ON WHATEVER CYPRUS SETTLEMENT IS BEING NEGOTIATED.

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